United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1333
18 February 1993

THURSDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council, in presidential statement last night, condemns blocking of humanitarian convoys and impeding of relief supplies for civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Lansana Kouyate appointed as Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Somalia, with immediate effect.

+ In Angola, Secretary-General's Special Representative is trying to set up next round of talks in Addis Ababa between representatives of UNITA and Angolan Government; reiterates appeal for cease-fire to allow for humanitarian assistance to reach Huambo and other needy areas.

+ As Secretary-General continues visit to Japan, he tours offices of Tokyo Metropolitan Government and holds press conference at National Press Club.

+ Talks aimed at ending conflict in former Yugoslavia continue in New York between Co-Chairmen and United States special envoy; Security Council to hold formal meeting tomorrow morning on renewal of UNPROFOR mandate.

+ Anti-Apartheid Committee discontinues registres set up to discourage sports and cultural contacts with South Africa.

+ African family planning leader and Japanese non-governmental organization are winners of 1993 United Nations Population Award.

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The Security Council, at a formal meeting last night, condemned the blocking of humanitarian convoys and the impeding of relief supplies for the civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

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The action came in response to the announcement yesterday by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) that it had suspended many of its operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina because of the "failure of all parties" to respect humanitarian principles.

In a statement read out by Council President Ahmed Snoussi (Morocco), the Council demanded that immediate and unimpeded access be given to humanitarian relief supplies. Further, it demanded that the parties and others concerned guarantee to High Commissioner Sadako Ogata that they would abide by the promises they had made to facilitate the full resumption of relief programmes.

UNHCR convoys were yesterday moved back to their bases and all relief activities in Serbian-controlled Bosnia were suspended. UNHCR activities in Sarajevo were also suspended and most staff was withdrawn, leaving only a skeleton UNHCR presence in the besieged city.

Meanwhile, the Council was continuing its consultations today on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in Croatia for an interim period until 31 March, as proposed by the Secretary-General. The Council would convene in a formal meeting tomorrow morning to take action on the Secretary-General's recommendations.

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Lansana Kouyate of Guinea has been appointed by the Secretary-General as his deputy Special Representative for Somalia, with immediate effect. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Kouyate was Guinea's Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

According a United Nations spokesman, the new Deputy Special Representative is expected to arrive in Somalia on 20 February to assume duty.

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In Angola, Margaret Anstee, the Secretary-General's Special Representative, is continuing her efforts to set up the next round of discussions in Addis Ababa between representatives of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Government.

According to a United Nations spokesman today, the fighting was continuing in some areas of the country with particular intensity in Huambo. Miss Anstee had reiterated her appeal of 10 February to the Government and UNITA for a cease-fire to allow for humanitarian assistance to reach Huambo and other needy areas. But so far, the spokesman said, there had been no formal response from either side to her appeal, although they had promised formally to consider the request.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, continuing his official visit to Japan, was given a brief tour today of the new building of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government by the Govenor of Tokyo, Shun-ichi Suzuki.

The Secretary-General and Mrs. Boutros-Ghali were then guests at a private luncheon, hosted by the Ambassador of Egypt and Mrs. Wahib Fahmy El-Miniawy at the Egyptian Embassy in Tokyo.

In the afternoon, the Secretary-General held a press conference at the invitation of Japan's National Press Club, attended by some 300 Japanese and international journalists.

In the evening, the Secretary-General received former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone before attending a private dinner hosted by the Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, Yoshio Hatano.

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Talks aimed at ending the year-old conflict in former Yugoslavia were continuing in New York today, according to Fred Eckhard, spokesman for the Co-Chairmen of the International Conference.

Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance met with the United States special envoy, Reginald Bartholomew and with United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright.

The Co-Chairmen also continued their meetings with the Croatian delegation as well as with the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation, Vitaliy Churkin, Mr. Eckhard said.

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A sports register, set up by the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid to discourage teams and individual athletes from engaging in sports activities in South Africa, has now been discontinued. A similar register to dissuade entertainers, actors and others from performing in South Africa has also been discontinued.

In a statement issued at Headquarters, the Chairman of the Committee, Ibrahim A. Gambari of Nigeria, said the two registers, set up in 1981 and 1983, respectively, had played an important role in isolating South Africa in the sports and cultural areas. As part of the international efforts to eliminate apartheid in South Africa, the registers also significantly contributed to the dismantling of the apartheid system through a new, non-racial and democratic constitution.

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An African family planning leader, Dr. Fred T. Sai of Ghana, and a Japanese non-governmental organization, Mainichi Shimbun Population Problems Research Council, are recipients of the 1993 United Nations Population Award.

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The two winners, which will each receive a diploma, a gold medal and a monetary prize, will be granted the award at a ceremony to be held later this year.

The award is presented annually by the Committee of the United Nations Population Award to individuals and institutions that have made outstanding contributions to increasing the awareness of population problems and to their solutions.

Dr. Sai was chosen by the Committee for his leadership in the field of family planning. He is noted for his contributions to research on nutrition, community welfare and family planning, and for his direct involvement in both national and international programmes that address the problems of high fertility throughout Africa and the developing world.

Mainichi Shimbun Population Problems Research Council was chosen for its achievements in creating awareness of population issues through Mainichi Shimbun, the newspaper that created the Council in 1949, and by continually publishing studies, books and articles on population.

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